

Good Morning.

I am delighted to be here on behalf of the North Carolina Coalition for lobbying and Government Reform representing over 50 groups and individuals ranging from AARP to the John Locke Foundation to NC Policy Watch and including distinguished North Carolinians such as Former US Congressman Bill Cobey, Judge Bob Orr, Former UNC Law School Dean Gene Nichols/

Our comments can be divided largely into 2 parts-

Things related to the operational side of the Commission

And things related to the need for legislative or executive change

The Commission staff is hardworking, committed, open, and easy to work with. They have managed to get the commission and the ethics process going in a remarkably short time. In fact, it is a pleasure to work with them. They are also understaffed, overworked, and lacking in resources especially technology.

In terms of the Commission operation our greatest concern is the lag time between when an advisory opinion is issued and when it becomes public. Most people want to follow the law but it is difficult to do when you are not sure what the right thing to do is. We understand that lack of staff and regulations can make it hard but the opinions aren't useful if they aren't accessible.

The Coalition had an experience with an advisory opinion on reporting compensation -- the opinion became public because we released it to the Secretary of State's office and on our website. All advisory opinions need to be available as quickly as possible. All advisory opinions which have